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Reading resource center: developed by the creativity and ingenuity of a resource person involving little expenditure

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READING RESOURCE CENTER: DEVELOPED BY THE
CREATIVITY AND INGENUITY OF A RESOURCE
PERSON INVOLVING LITTLE EXPENDITURE

CARDINAL STRITCH COLLEGE
LIBRARY
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

by
Sister Michelle Severt, C.S.J.

A RESEARCH PAPER
SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS IN EDUCATION
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This research paper has been
approved for the Graduate Committee
of the Cardinal Stritch College by

George J. Cretelli
(Adviser)

Date Feb. 23, 1972

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

Introduction

The small town school need not be deprived of some of the better things that are being offered in reading programs in larger areas where funds are abundant to innovate and complement the regular classroom program.

One of the better means of doing this, so that the individual child may reach his potential through independent work, is the Reading Resource Center which is the subject of this paper.

As was indicated above, this center is to serve the children of a small town. The implementation of setting up the center will require ingenuity and creativity on the part of the teacher involved. The teacher in question has been looking forward to this task with great enthusiasm.

The true purpose in the mind of the creator of this center has been brought out by Arthur Combs quoted by Mary Austin in one of her conferences, "that the problem of learning always involves two aspects providing new information or experience and helping the learner discover

the meaning of information for himself."¹

Another authority supports the idea of the value of the independent activity.

Independent activities should basically grow from and be related to the reading materials being used in the developmental lessons. However, they may also include materials of a nature so as to provide worthwhile practice, concept building, or environmental learnings.²

It is the center which will provide these independent activities.

The careful arrangement of the center in question will have materials and equipment that will "revitalize the curriculum and bring about exciting changes in pupil interests and attitudes."³

The children for whom the center is prepared will be stimulated, using all senses, visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile. Everything we read today encourages personal choice and pacing. According to Goodlad and Anderson, "the nongraded teacher is free to guide the

1

Mary C. Austin, "What Lies Ahead in Primary Reading?" (Paper presented at the College Reading Association Conference, Knoxville, Tennessee), (April, 1968), p. 20. (MF ED022627).

2

Rita Ciotti and Ida Kravitz, "Independent Reading Activities," (Great Cities School Improvement Program, Philadelphia, Penn.), (June, 1965), p. 1. (MF ED01012).

3

Ibid., p. 10.

timing and pacing of learning in accordance with what he⁴ knows about the components of the learning act itself."

The resource teacher will work as a teammate in the area of reinforcement.

Statement of the Problem

The primary purpose of this paper is to show how a Reading Resource Center can come into being through an interested resource person, involving small expenditure. The writer hopes to prove this is no "impossible dream". This center will serve the needs of primary children.

A secondary purpose is to study and list materials and equipment necessary for the center.

Limitations of the Investigation

This study is limited in services to primary children in a small town, and limited funds, effective but not elaborate. The creativity and the ingenuity of the teacher plays an important role in overcoming the specified limitations.

Definition of Terms

A Learning Center is set-up in which there are various areas of learning activities, such as, science, library, creative writing and art.

A Resource Person is one who is available to help select and evaluate materials, assist teachers, and suggests ways and means of meeting individual needs.

The Reading Resource Center is an organization whereby pupils are able to work independently under the guidance of a qualified reading specialist.

CHAPTER II

In this great age of space, man has successfully landed on the moon, and has "probed the planetary system with rockets capable of sending coded telemetric signals back to earth."¹ Yet, at the same time "one out of every four students nationwide has significant reading deficiencies"² as was proclaimed by James E. Allen, Jr. when he addressed the National Association of State Boards of Education in Chicago.

Reading takes priority over other subjects in importance. There is a need for success in reading. How can success be attained? The Fountain Valley School District in California believes:

. . . equipping a child with independent and creative learning skills as a basic goal. Through new teaching methods and tools, provisions are made to help pupils become self-directed and find their optimum working level. One of the most significant of these new methods and tools is the establishment of learning centers.³

¹
Donald L. Cleland, "Education's Moonshot: Our Challenge," Reading Teacher, XXV (November, 1971), p. 133.

²
Helen Huus, "Right to Read, IRA, and What You Can Do," Reading Teacher, XXV (November, 1971), p. 132.

³
Betty Christianson and Larry Holliday, "Learning Centers that Work," Instructor, LXXIX (October, 1969), p. 135.

The purpose of the reading resource center is to provide each child with "independent and creative learning"⁴ skills. Each child can progress at his own level without being pressured by other levels or groups.

The children who use the reading resource center can be selective in their choice of materials and activities. According to Goodlad, "the child does not have graded content to contend with—that is, content pre-packaged for consumption as though all learners were ready to consume it together."⁵

The reading resource center is geared to serve the slow, the average and the gifted. It is also able to take care of students in large groups, small groups as well as independent study. Baskins defines independent study as:

. . . independent work or reading, sometimes on one's own, sometimes in small groups, but with such work taking place in the absence of the teacher in lieu of certain regularly scheduled class meetings. ⁶

4

Ibid., p. 135.

5

John I. Goodlad and Robert H. Anderson, The Nongraded Elementary School (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1959), p. 87.

6

David W. Beggs and Edward G. Buffie, Independent Study: Bold New Venture (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1965), p. 10.

The role of the reading resource person is similar to that of the reading consultant which is to perfect within limitations of staff, students, community, and facilities, the teaching of reading within a school. The reading consultant works in more than one school. H. Alan Robinson defines a reading consultant as:

a person largely freed of classroom teaching and other school responsibilities in order that he may concentrate on assisting the staff in the coordination and facilitation of efforts to improve the reading program. ⁷

The reading resource person "offers curriculum ⁸ leadership to teachers", assists in the planning and selecting of learning activities as well as instructional materials whether used in the classroom or reading resource center. It is also the duty of the resource person to be available for conferences with individual teachers. He informs teachers of the resources in the center "and demonstrates their uses. He provides direct pupil instruction, according to the needs diasnosed by classroom ⁹ teachers."

7

H. Alan Robinson and Sidney Rauch, Guiding the Reading Program, (Chicago: Science Research Associates, Inc., 1965), p. 135

8

Betty Christianson and Larry Holliday, "Learning Centers that Work," Instructor, LXXIX (October, 1969), p. 135.

9

Ibid., p. 135.

It is of utmost importance that the reading resource person be acquainted with all types of children's literature. He should be willing to explain the reading improvement program to all interested persons.

The reading resource center is of service to the children in the primary grades. Games both commercial and teacher made, will be used to teach the various skills such as, vocabulary and comprehension. Audio-visual aids for listening and participation will be incorporated. According to Mary Austin: "The appropriate use of new materials and electronic devices can be expected to whet children's intellectual appetites and to augment their learning."¹⁰

Teacher aides who will be trained to work in the center will be of service. They will become familiar with the various instructional materials, games, and equipment.

In the literature read on this subject, the writer is of the opinion that all the centers of learning were successful. The writer also found out that little research

is done on this subject according to Beggs and Buffie:

Most of the existing literature describes and evaluates the models in higher education. Articles about independent study in elementary and secondary schools are just beginning to ripple through publications used by the practitioner, under such sections as learning centers, library services, and projects. Little research is to be found in research journals. 11

The reading resource center is an advantage for the students as it is to bring out the uniqueness and individuality of each. There will be a continuous progress for all the children.

CHAPTER III

To have a successful reading resource center, it is necessary to have effective coordination and team planning with all the staff members as Goodlad said:

. . . schoolmen who try to bring about changes singlehandedly are carving out a huge task for themselves. Change is most likely to result when an entire faculty shares a vision and combines with that vision long-term concerted action to make the dream come true. ¹

In creating a reading resource center it is imperative that there be a "large amount of agreement on the educational goals of the school district and each teacher accomplishing these objectives." ²

The specific goals and objectives of an individualized learning in action is to enliven the spirit of innovation, experimentation and venturesomeness in the life of teachers, students, parents and other administrative personnel. Some of the patterns of goals are as follows:

We believe that each child has uniqueness and individuality.

¹
J. E. Goodlad, "In Pursuit of Visions," Elementary School Journal, LIX (October, 1958), p. 1.

²
Robert C. Gerletti, "What Is A Media Center?" Audiovisual Instruction, VIV (September, 1969), p. 21.

We trust that students need many learning styles and learning skills. He has the right to be an active doer in his learning and thinking process.

We hope that the learning environment respects the individual learner and adds to his personal growth.

We entrust that future days will become a continuous progress in the life of all students.

We established a flexible plan of organizing materials and resources to meet each student's academic way of life.

These specific goals will be met through methods and conditions found and developed through individualized instruction.

Various strategies of instructional means will be initiated through small group instruction, pupil-team instruction, independent study, multi-age grouping, teacher aides and resource room. Thus, a wide range of basic and specialized materials for skill reinforcement and advancement for the learner will be provided. A variety of interest areas will enhance the student for a place of lively learning.

³
"Planning starts with a program." The reading resource person meets with the primary teachers once a week after school in order to aid them in working with students to improve their reading skills. The new

³
John E. Martin, "Guidelines for Planning Special Reading Facilities," The Reading Teacher, XXIV (December, 1970), p. 203.

reading program is explained in detail to the teachers.

This reading resource center will incorporate prescriptive learning. The teacher sends a group of children to the center with a written prescription of the skill or skills these children need practice in. The resource teacher will direct the children. They in turn will teach each other as well as work independently.

The prescriptive materials laboratory is based on the hypothesis that educational materials can be adequately broken down to be used effectively with specifically defined learning problems. ⁴

The reading resource center being created is in a spacious room. The tile walls on both sides of the steps leading to the center are decorated with pictures made by the students depicting stories read from library and supplementary books.

"Children will respond favorably in a room that is attractive, and encourages them to explore, create, and learn, and that promotes happy living and working ⁵ together."

Seating arrangements should be flexible and all

⁴ Carlene VanEtten, "Ingredients," (Immediate Materials Selection), (April, 1969), p. 1. (MF EDO31386).

⁵ Curriculum Guide for Kindergarten-Primary, Milwaukee Public Schools, (Revised, 1964), p. 9.

furniture should be comfortable and properly scaled for the children using it.

Equipment should assist learning and not cause anxieties. Equipment should be simple and comfortable. It must be of a type to accomodate the competence of the user.

The cassette player is the most widely used in this center. Educational television is also available. Mary Austin said: "It is safe to predict the widespread use of T.V. as a medium of teaching reading in schools and homes by 1980."⁶

Other machines that are most useful are the overhead projector, head sets, SRA reading accelerator, films, and filmstrips.

The opportunity to use a variety of audiovisual materials to implement learning experience allows diversification which could create a more stimulating atmosphere and increased personal involvement on the part of the learner. The combination of pupils increased desire to learn and the communication of information through multisensory channels should enhance the pupil's success in reaching the immediate goal of the particular lesson. ⁷

6

Mary C. Austin, "What Lies Ahead in Primary Reading," (Paper presented at the College Reading Association Conference, Knoxville, Tennessee), (April, 1968), p. 22. (MF ED022627).

7

"Focus on Reading-Reading Center Program: ESEA," Title I, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Milwaukee Public Schools, 1970.

Materials must be so varied as to provide experiences through use of all the senses: visual, auditory, and tactile.

Materials should be in a convenient location. They should accomodate the individuality of the pupils as well as the teacher. Materials should provoke an enthusiasm for learning.

Instructional materials facilitate communication. They make new ideas alive and meaningful. Their use helps the teacher illustrate the spoken word, provide variation in the repetition of facts, and practice in the skills . . . They help to teach effectively our rapidly accumulating new knowledge. 8

Many of the instructional materials necessary for teaching cannot be procured because of financial reasons so it is up to the ingenuity and creativity of the teachers to supplant them.

Games written up (see Appendix II) are just a few that have been collected and are incorporated in this resource center. 9

8
Wesley G. Sowards and Mary Margaret Scobey, The Changing Curriculum and the Elementary Teacher, (California: Wadsworth Publishing Company Inc., 1961), p. 441.

9
Sister Jeannine Newman, Reading Games, (A Collection of Games), (Oak Creek, Wisconsin, 1969), pp. 3-4-6-7-12.

Lenore Sleisinger states: "There is nothing magical about teaching word attack skills by use of games."¹⁰ Children do learn from them. Games have their place and should not be overused. . . . "Used wisely, games are an enjoyable way for volunteer and child to practice, review, and gain insight."¹¹

Instructional games should be enticing and have a certain degree of durability and attractiveness.

One main area of this resource center is the library corner with an adequate supply of books. This area has a multi-colored hanging light, a round table made from a refinished spool. (See Appendix I). This is a quiet corner so the children may enjoy their books and be away from other activities.

Other materials supplied in this center are:
A large quantity of supplementary books, consumable supplementary workbooks, SRA Labs, and commercial games such as;

Lyons and Carnahan games

Ginn Alphabet and picture cards

Dolch word and picture cards

Milton Bradley flash cards

¹¹

Ibid., p. 34.

Kenworthy self teaching vocabulary builder

Garrard Press group word and teaching games.

The furniture in this particular reading resource room is very attractive. The writer will describe each one.

Teacher's desk, chair, and an open book shelf are antiques of a Grecian style.

Rocking chair--refinished.

Bulletin Boards--displays a reinforcement project each month.

Bookshelf covered with attractive contact paper.

Small chairs and an open bookshelf painted blue.

Telephone spools made into tables.

Desks put together and covered with flowered plastic cloth.

Heavy cardboard boxes painted--used to store materials to be used in making various educational games and devices.

See Appendix I for the arrangement of this furniture in the resource room.

A letter was written to twenty large publishing companies asking for any free materials and brochures. (See Appendix III). At least half of them responded but the writer got very little material to use for this paper.

CHAPTER IV

Summary

The small town in question will not be deprived of some of the better things being offered in reading programs in larger areas.

We believe in the "Right to Read" according to Dr. James E. Allen, Jr., "that no one shall be leaving our schools without the skill and the desire necessary to read to the full limits of his capability."¹

It is through the reading resource center under the guidance of a qualified reading teacher that this will be possible.

The reading resource center being established will be equipped to meet the needs and the individual differences of each person.

The children will work independently or in groups using prescriptive learning.

¹ Donald L. Cleland, "Education's Moonshot: Our Challenge," The Reading Teacher, XXV (November, 1971), p. 133.

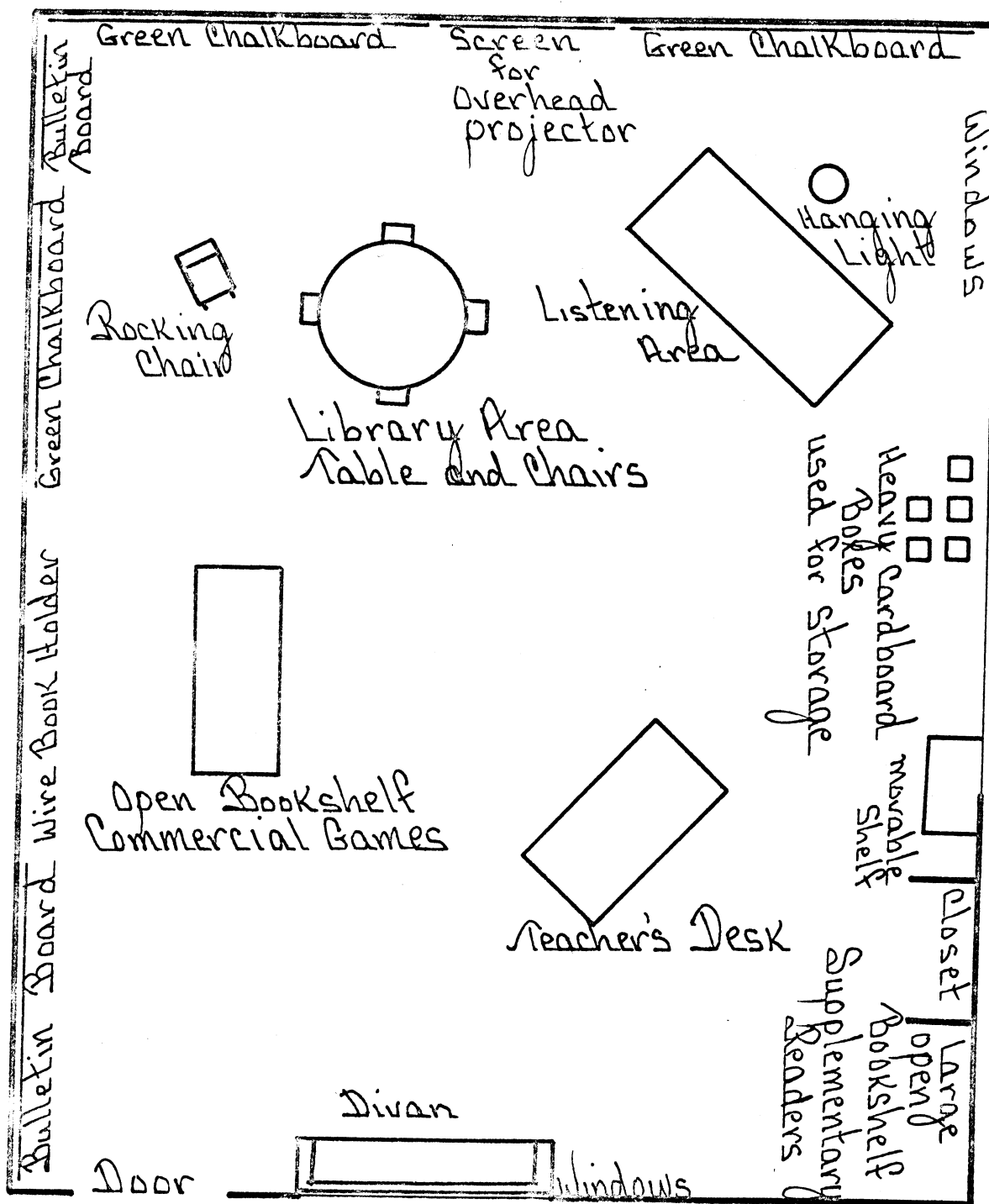
Conclusion

The writer submitting this paper wishes to direct her efforts and her enthusiasm in assisting students in their educational program. Such a resource room of visual and auditorial equipment and creative materials will stimulate and vibrate the inner feelings and thoughts of children whereby growth and personal development will be the end product. The resource person herself will generate the pulsating beat that makes the educational desire live in the mind of the student. Students in the primary need this channeling of energy and this challenge of curiosity to be satisfied through books, games, stories, puzzles or other avenues of learning.

The establishment of such a reading resource room has exploding and dynamic possibilities of living vitality to the resource person, to other personnel of the school to interested parents and to the entire community.

The theme "we have just begun" to explore ways and means of helping students be happy and content in this learning process of education is uppermost in the mind and in the desire of the writer of this paper.

APPENDIX I



APPENDIX II

Sort a Consonant--1-2

Individual or small group

An old tablecloth is marked off in twenty-six sections with a letter of the alphabet in each. A container of various objects is collected and the child sorts the objects on the cloth according to initial or final consonants. Objects may include anything: pin, pen, pencil, magazine, ruler, doll, puppet, truck, etc.

Toss--1-4

Small group

Materials: Fasten eight margarine containers to heavy cardboard scattered in a pattern. Write a blend on each container.

Rules: Children sit around the table containing the game-board. Each child in turn tosses three small balls or marbles from his lap. As the balls fall into one of the containers, he gives a word with the blend indicated. For each correct response he receives one point.

To win: The child with the most points.

Adaptations: Any other phonetic element may be placed on the containers, or numbers for syllables as in the preceding game.

Puzzle Words--1-4

Small rectangular shaped light cardboard is used to make this game. A picture of a single object is pasted or stamped with the word written. The cardboard is then cut in three irregular pieces. Five puzzles are placed in one box and the child unscrambles the 15 pieces to make five pictures with words. The teacher listens to the child as he spells the words and at the same time the child sees that words are made from letters.

Adapted to third grade by using multi-syllable words and dividing between syllables. Child tells why the word is divided where it is.

Turtle Race--1-3

2 to 6 players

Materials: Pictures from an old readiness book are pasted on an old tablecloth, shower curtain, or cardboard. Turtles are made from english walnut shells with a small piece of pipe cleaner for a head. Each turtle has a drop of different color paint so the players can tell them apart.

Rules:

The first player throws a dice and moves his turtle along the path the number of spaces indicated. He tells the name of the picture and another word that begins with the same sound. Later he may be asked to tell the letter with which each picture begins.

Sorting Vowels--1-4

Containers easily obtained at an ice cream parlor are good for sorting vowels. Painted attractively, they make a fine merry-go-round or pyramid. Ten containers are adequate. Short and long vowels can be put on one side, with vowels of like sound on the other side. Aw and au would be on the same container, er, ir, ur, would be on the same container, etc. Collect objects of any kind and keep it in a box for long and short vowels, for the other side of the barrels. Children take the objects and listen for the vowel sound and place it in the correct container.

Tittle Words--3-5

Small group

Materials: Small sections are marked off on some large round object like a plate or lid. A letter is written in each section. Any kind of chips may be used.

Rules: The chips are flipped toward the letters on his paper. He then tries to form letters into words. To encourage larger words, set up a point system for the children.

To win: The child with the most points.

APPENDIX III

Parsons Catholic Elementary School
Stevens at Central-320 North 29th
Parsons, Kansas 67357
September 29, 1971

Dear Sir:

I am writing my research paper to obtain my masters degree in Supervision of Reading. The title of this paper is "Setting Up A Reading Resource Center" for the primary grades. I am interested in any free material or brochures you may be able to send pertaining to games and equipment to be used in such a center.

Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Sister Michelle Severt

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